



ORGANIZACIÓN NACIONAL INDIGENA DE COLOMBIA ONIC

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The leadership of the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC) seeks, under the “Mesa Permanente de Concertación,” to inform of and condemn the recent murders of our indigenous brothers in the departments of Córdoba and Antioquia.

Our fallen peers are:

- a. Fernando Tequia, Governor of the Embera Katío, was killed in the municipality of Urrao, Antioquia, on July 2. According to William Carupia, spokesman for the Indigenous Organization of Antioquia (OIA), 14 indigenous individuals have been murdered in this region so far this year.
- b. Carmen Fuentes, an Embera Katío leader of the indigenous *cabildo* “Porvenir la Fe” was killed on July 5 in Monte Líbano, Córdoba. His suspected murderer, known by the alias “Jonathan,” was captured earlier today and has been identified by community members as a member of “Los Rastrojos.”

It appears that these crimes were perpetrated by members of the illegal armed group “Los Rastrojos” as a reaction to the political activism of these indigenous leaders defending their communities from the threats and violence of misnamed “criminal gangs.” The armed group’s tactics are directly related to the presence of mineral resources in indigenous territories.

In addition to the condemnation generated due to the barbaric nature of these crimes, the murders underscore the need for political reflection within the indigenous movement.

It is unacceptable that massacres continue to take place within indigenous territory as a dialogue has been initiated with the national government within the framework of the “Mesa Permanente de Concertación.” A sincere and open dialogue cannot exist when the indigenous voice remains intimidated and frightened in the public sphere. Discussion is not possible when indigenous peoples are being exterminated with bloody and ignominious impunity. Ten years have passed since the disappearance of Kimy Pernía Domicó. The circumstances relating to his case have not been clarified, and those responsible have not been prosecuted; this is evidence of the lack of guarantees for indigenous peoples in the midst of the conflict.

Given this situation, we strongly urge the Colombian Government to immediately institute measures to prosecute those responsible for these and all other crimes against indigenous



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peoples that exacerbate our vulnerability and contribute to our physical and cultural extermination.

The aspirations of indigenous communities to continue to exist on the planet are continually threatened by malevolent forces that overwhelm these voices crying for life in the face of death. The indigenous organizations gathered under the “Mesa Nacional de Concertación” feel, in their flesh, the bullets that continue to silence the voices of indigenous leaders.